

A Critical Study on the problems of ESL Students

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Abstract — Second-language instruction has come a long. Still, it has a long way to go. Collecting information from different approaches has been the method followed from the beginning. Probably this is the suitable approach as we propose many styles of learning and events to train the students in a better way. Further, a free approach allows teachers to glean the effective elements from many methods that really work in the classroom. Language learning methodologies worth when they succeed.

Working with ESL issues is a bit difficult and tiring and also confusing at times. However, ESL students often show pleasure themselves to work on it. They know that they need to improve their English; usually they are quite well-prepared and show willingness to work. Language acquisition is a slow, painful process, but a bit of effort eventually adds up to fluency or at least a get through in a composition course. Things may move very slowly in the sessions with ESL students as they might work on it slowly till he/she gets a little bit command over it. The teacher needs to spend more time talking to the ESL students than he or she spends with the other students because the teacher needs to focus on the students with much interest and it needs a lot of attention.

The paper benefits the teacher as well as the student as it gives a solution for the teachers to teach it in a better and an easy way. It makes easy for the students so that they can find a solution for their problems.

“There is no teaching until the pupil is brought into the same state or principle in which you are; a transfusion takes place; he [or she] is you and you are he [or she]. Then is a teaching, and by no unfriendly chance or bad company can he ever quite lose the benefit.”

- Ralph Waldo Emerson in his essays

Language acquisition is a slow, painful process, but small improvements in due course adds up to fluency-and sometimes adds up to at least an average grade with the help of their learning process. Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenge for a teacher because the teacher needs to justify all the students that all the students should be able to learn something in a classroom even though they are of different abilities and different pace while learning English language. Students' attitudes about their studies, their home situations, literacy, self-confidence, academic level, identification with their native language and country are only a few factors that affect their ability to learn or acquire a new language. Students know that their English needs progress, they ask for help willingly, and they

are frequently quite well-prepared and eager to work. As an ESL teacher, we must learn to constantly adapt to your students needs. Many times, this means dealing with a variety of problems in the classroom, many of which are all too common occurrences. A good ESL teacher must be able to recognize these common problems, and work to find solutions. Even a small turn in the teaching methods can help to create a more productive and casual environment for both teacher and the students.

These days the ESL teachers around the country prefer and follow some of the forms of communicative teaching and learning as well. But many had neglected or restricted using the Audio – lingual method and its source. One must remember that a successful teacher who teaches English language as a second language may not be in favor with any one of the method. He or She should be able and be comfortable with the maximum number of methods so that he or she can select different teaching strategies from different methods, and utilize them which suit the needs of his or her materials and students.

It is important that the students should be given the maximum number of opportunities to practice English in the class as well as outside the classroom, as learning activity outside the classroom will enable the student to memorize as well as widen the scope of learning themselves. It is also important for them to have time and freedom to digest, reflect and analyze what has been imparted or fed to them. An ESL teacher should continually learn the new techniques from his/her colleagues and his/her students also as he or she interacts with them. The teacher needs to know the new directions in teaching of English to speakers of other languages which are debated in the journals and demonstrated in new textbooks. The teacher in his/her speech, pronunciation, and writing should be as close to the "standard" as possible, or native-like, if he/she is not a native speaker of English. She may use regional characteristics of English to inform and entertain, but he/she should be able to switch to the "standard" for presenting his/her lessons. The teachers' writing in English should be simple, straightforward and plain. She should have a good command and conscious knowledge of the grammatical structures of the language. The teacher should have a clear voice, should be energetic and enthusiastic so that the class will come alive in their presence. It is important for him or her to get all her students involved in the drills and exercises conducted in the class.

Teaching ESL students takes lot of time as the teacher needs to give an elaborated description on what he or she teaches and waits for the student to respond. ESL classes go very slow because the student needs to work on the exercises which are similar to the content what the teacher delivers. The teacher might feel the class disturbed but he should focus only on the progress of his or her students and should be positive in the interactions with the students. The teacher should never feel guilty for these fragments. The teacher usually doesn't have a wider scope to think about grammar because ESL class is a writing oriented session and the

teacher focuses on reading comprehensions, paragraph writing, and analytical writing. It is better to save half of the session or one third of the session for working on the language like grammar, sentence constructions etc.

Students work more if you encourage them. Reading comprehension enables the student to use the dictionary, encourages him/her to learn vocabulary, the student will also show much interest if you start evaluating him instantly or immediately after completion of the work by the student. Your work will be handy if the student goes line by line and word by word, when (s)he does an exercise on a reading comprehension passage and then explain how to correct it without talking. If you feel that you need to give your other students an explanation, simply congratulate them on their ability to write and read independently during their tutoring sessions, and remind them again how important it is for them to produce writing that will be useful to them. ESL students may already be familiar with grammar at times then the teacher should give them maximum number of exercises and give them some time to complete the exercise and finally after completing the work reveal them the key and tell them to identify their errors and correct them. Further, instruct them to express the reason for the correct answer. If you don't have a way of finding a pattern in the errors, or if you don't have a way of describing the language problems you see, then you are likely to look for a remedy by telling the student what to give in the exercise, it will help the student to rectify the errors on his/her own without the consulting the teacher. If you don't do this, however, you disable the student of the chance to develop better language skills, and then our purpose may be unfulfilled as our goal is to promote independent reading and writing.

The teacher should also concentrate on the students' acquisition of grammar, as it helps the student to enrich his/her language. The best way to approach deep grammatical problems is to start asking basic questions such as:

Does each sentence have a subject-noun, subject- verb-object, and direct or indirect objects if it needs them?

If the student's sentences are consistently missing anyone of these, you've already identified an important pattern of error for the student to work on. When you ask the student to start correcting this pattern, encourage him or her to stick to Basic English sentence structure, just for practice. Ask the student to start each sentence with its subject-noun, follow it with the verb, the direct object, the indirect object, etc. Point out one or two patterns of error, and then ask the student to find and correct similar errors in the rest of the paper. Start with deep grammatical problems like: missing subject-nouns, missing verbs in subject-verb – object, inconsistent verb tenses. Also include less serious errors: Misuse or lack of "a" and "the" (Articles), word choice problems, misplaced or missing apostrophes, capitalization, punctuation problems, wrong prepositions wrong choice of pronouns etc. Take few photos to the class and ask the students to describe the picture, and as they do it try to give them several hints so that they can build upon, keep asking them questions related to the given picture. Next go through the passage written by them. Look at the used words and phrases. Then ask the student to read or explain what he has written, and then evaluate them. Point out his/her grammatical mistakes and correct them and if necessary edit them. By this exercise the teacher can know the various skills of a student both written and speaking. The teacher may only be able to rework one paragraph in the entire session. After using this method a while, you will start to notice at least one pattern of error that you can get the student to work on independently in your next session. Finally see that the students use the grammar handbook they bought for their course. The teacher needs to ask the students to use their own grammar handbook saying that it will train them and it would be self-sufficient in using that handbook.

The ESL students also have a big problem while coming to reading competence. They too face many problems because reading is also one of the toughest components of ESL learning. We all know that "every act of comprehension involves one's knowledge of the world as well". The reading process, therefore, involves identification formal structure and topic, allow the readers to comprehend the text. If the topics are outside of their experience or base of knowledge, they feel that they are in the midst of an unknown sea. When the students face such unfamiliar topics, some of the students may over use maximum time by reading slowly, few students may compensate by wild guessing. Both strategies inevitably result in comprehension difficulties. So, the content should be familiar so that the texts would be relatively accessible and comprehensible.

One of the major problems faced by the ESL students is that many times the students are not sure whether they could understand the text what they read and what they will have to do after reading the material. It is the duty of the teacher to help the students in their classes to become more effective readers. During the course the ESL students are to read many texts. It is through reading that the students can acquire much knowledge and understand the different subject areas and reading often forms the follow – up work such as after class room discussions and assignments. For these reasons it is essential that ESL students are to be helped as much as possible and necessary to understand what they read. Thus, with a little assistance their frustrating reading experience can be turned into a more profitable one. The problems usually faced by the ESL students are unfamiliar vocabulary, as it contains many words that are unknown to the student. In the following sentence, for example, the instruction is

simple but the language in which it is used is not simple:

“Concern not to buy inexpensive paraphernalia for such expeditions”.

Next, students find difficulty if the Syntax is complex. The above text is also difficult because of its syntactic complexity. In general, long sentences are found to be complex when compared to the short sentences but, For example, the second instruction below is probably more readily understood than the first one.

Explain clearly why Mr. Haroun was happy in the miserable city. Give at least three reasons for his happiness.

Thirdly, few writers’ texts are filled with complex noun groups which puzzle the students. The structure refers to the way writer’s link phrases, clauses and sentences into a logical way. However, a mature and pleasing style can be not clear to language learners. Poor Writing is also one of the final sources of difficulty which is associated with the many different signs of poor writing.

In the pairs of sentences below, the first one in each case will probably be more difficult to understand than the second:

Vikram bought a red cap and John a blue one.
Vikram bought a red cap and John bought a blue cap.

The teacher can help the students in understanding the reading material, some of the students have to read what is there in the text and there is detailed advice of scope where the teacher can help the student producing comprehensible worksheets and tests which mean the maximum information that the students have to read in the subject text will come from textbooks or, more recently, from the Internet. So, the teacher may not have total control over the content and style of these passages, what the teacher can do is to decide whether to use the exercises from the text or add some other

similar to the exercises in the text. So alternatively the teacher could choose to add to the text to make it more accessible which might be done practically even though that might be complex and time-consuming process.

The teacher should make sure that students shall understand why they are reading the text and what they will have to do afterwards. ESL students often believe they need to understand every word of a text, whereas in many cases they can redeem the task requirements by scanning or skimming through the passage. Having a clear reading purpose helps them to focus more efficiently on the information they need to extract. The teacher should ensure that students have the necessary background information before they are asked to read and comprehend long texts. It is important for the students to focus on the topic and use their knowledge before facing the text. This often provides the opportunity to pre-teach essential vocabulary contained in the text. The teacher should encourage students to read up about the topic beforehand, introduce some key vocabulary from the text, make the students predict the information they will find out in the text and the vocabulary they will meet in the text. Finally the teacher should also remind the students of the importance of looking at headings, diagrams, and illustrations.

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